

Bureau of Animal Regulation and Care Rescue Group Policies and Procedures Manual



Bureau of Animal Regulation and Care
3200 Carr
Houston, TX 77026
Shelter Services: 713.229.7300
Rescue Group Contact: BARCvolunteers@cityofhouston.net
www.houstonbarc.com

Table of Contents

Welcome!	3
Mission Statement	3
Thank you!	3
Agency Overview / Business Hours / Phone Numbers	4
Rescue Group Policies and Procedures	5
Rescue Group Application	11
Rescue Group Agreement	11
Rescue Group Profile	12
Rescue Group Questionnaire	13

Welcome!

Welcome to the Bureau of Animal Regulation and Care (BARC) Rescue Group Program! We are very grateful to have you as a part of our team. We hope that your Rescue Group's affiliation with BARC will be extremely rewarding. Your group can have a huge impact on the lives of homeless animals. The support of Rescue Groups is critical to the success of BARC and the fulfillment of our mission.

We look forward to collaborating with your Rescue Group and finding every dog and cat a forever home!

Mission Statement

The Bureau of Animal Regulation and Care promotes and protects public health and animal care through animal law enforcement, sheltering, pet placement programs, and pet ownership education.

BARC staff and volunteers share the values of professionalism, responsibility, compassion, commitment, integrity, and accountability with our community partners. These values are exhibited through:

- Providing animal control and care services that minimize fear, pain, stress and suffering to animals in and out of the shelter
- Providing safe and healthy human-animal interactions
- Providing humane, efficient, high-quality care of animals in our shelter
- Promoting responsible pet ownership including licensing, vaccinations, and spaying/neutering
- Promoting compassion toward animals in and out of the shelter

Thank You!

We would like to thank you for choosing to participate in our program. Rescue Groups are a valuable asset to our organization and to the many animals that need loving homes.

For decades, BARC has provided a multitude of services to the residents and animals of the City of Houston. Current services include sheltering animals, spaying and neutering adoptable animals, animal control services, low cost micro chipping, vaccinations, and pet licensing. Since your work as a Rescue Group is so extremely important, your decision to affiliate with BARC must be made with the full understanding of the commitment and responsibility it demands.

This manual has been prepared for you as a reference guide. It contains information regarding our Rescue Group Policies and Procedures as well as general information about BARC.

Thank you for giving your time and energy to the animals at Bureau of Animal Regulation and Care. We hope that your Rescue Group's work with BARC will be as rewarding to you as it is to the animals.

Bureau of Animal Regulation and Care

Services BARC offers

- Sheltering Animals
- Spaying and Neutering of Adoptable Animals
- Animal Control Services
- Low Cost Microchipping
- Pet Licensing
- Vaccinations

Hours of Operation

- Animal Adoption Center (to adopt a dog or cat)
- Animal Regulation / Control (to drop off a sick or injured animal)
- Animal Surrender (to drop off a pet the pet owner can no longer maintain)
 - Monday - Friday: 11:30 AM to 5:30 PM
 - Saturday - Sunday: 12:00 PM to 4:00 PM
- Clinic Hours for Adopters, Fosters, and Rescue Groups
 - Monday - Friday: 11:30 AM to 1:00 PM and 2:00 PM to 4:00 PM
 - Saturday - Sunday: 12:00 PM to 4:00 PM

Contact Information

Bureau of Animal Regulation and Care
3200 Carr
Houston, TX 77026

Shelter Services: 713-229-7300

www.houstonbarc.com

Community Involvement Coordinator: BARCvolunteers@cityofhouston.net.

Rescue Group Policies and Procedures

Rescue Policy

BARC's mission is to place as many animals as possible, either through adoption or through transfer of ownership to Approved Rescue Groups. When working with Rescue Groups, BARC's policy is to transfer animals to approved rescue organizations in a safe, swift and timely manner.

BARC's Obligations

- To designate a representative who will assist the Rescue Group's representative(s) in transferring animals to their group.
- To share with the Rescue Group any information regarding the animal's health and temperament provided to BARC by the previous owner or determined by BARC staff.
- To determine the availability of an animal for rescue or adoption. BARC has the sole authority to determine the availability of any animal and may deny transfer at any time.

Rescue Group Application Requirements

To become an Approved Rescue Group with BARC, we ask that you:

- Submit a Rescue Group Application.
- Provide proof of your organization's 501(c)(3) status.
- Provide a copy of your organization's mission statement, adoption standards and contracts, and spay/neuter policies.
- Provide Profile Data, including a list of individuals authorized to pull animals on behalf of your organization.
- Submit the contact information for veterinarians BARC staff can contact for reference checks on your organization.
- There are additional requirements for organizations that wish to participate in BARC's program for Breed Specific Rescue (BSR) Groups (see below).

When you become an Approved Rescue Group, we ask that you abide by the following guidelines:

- Review and adhere to all BARC policies and procedures.
- Comply with all city, county and state codes regarding the care, sheltering, and adoption of animals.
- Abide by the guidance, evaluation and decisions of the BARC staff in all matters relating to the conduct of BARC business.
- Participate in all mandatory Rescue Group meetings.
- Use BARC equipment in an appropriate and safe manner at all times.
- Respect the premises by returning them to an orderly condition after completing tasks.
- Inform the Community Involvement Coordinator of any concerns about animal health, safety, and facility conditions as well as other areas that need improvement. You may also submit suggestions and concerns by email to BARCRescues@cityofhouston.net.
- Provide a monthly report to the Community Involvement Coordinator that includes proof of spay/neuter for all animals released to your organization under a Sterilization Agreement in the prior month. Rescue Groups may use the standardized reporting form.

Procedures for Approved Rescue Groups

- Animal Intake
 - Kennel staff will conduct the normal intake process.
 - Animal will be given vaccines, in accordance with regular intake procedures.
 - With the exception of animals subject to Medical Release and animals that are surrendered by their owners, all animals will be held for the mandatory 3 full day impoundment period ("the Impoundment Period") after arriving at the shelter.
- Identification of Potential Animals for Rescue by Approved Rescue Groups
 - Rescue Groups may review the BARC website to identify potential animals for rescue.
 - Although no animals will be released without a Medical Release during the Impoundment Period, a Rescue Group may place a hold on animals during that period. Such a hold will expire 24 hours after the end of the Impoundment Period.
 - Once an animal is identified, the Rescue Group should contact the Community Involvement Coordinator to request a 24-hour hold. When placing a hold, the Rescue Group's designated representative should give the Community Involvement Coordinator an estimated pickup time and indicate whether the Rescue Group would like to request heartworm testing, a Microchip, and/or spay/neuter. Additional charges will apply for each of these services.
 - Only Breed Specific Rescue Groups may place a hold on pure bred animals during the Impoundment Period. Such a hold will expire 24 hours after the end of the Impoundment Period.
- Identification of Potential Animals for Rescue by BARC Staff
 - When possible, the Community Involvement Coordinator, in coordination with kennel staff, may identify potential animals for rescue.
 - In those cases, the Community Involvement Coordinator will contact appropriate Rescue Groups for possible transfer.
- Retrieval of Animal at BARC
 - Representatives of the Rescue Group should sign in at the front desk reception area.
 - A designated representative may request the animal from the Front Desk Customer Service Staff, who will verify that person's identification and authorization to retrieve animals on behalf of the Rescue Group using the Rescue Group Profile data.
 - Rescue Group's designated representative must pay the applicable fees for the transfer and for any additional veterinary services requested, receive the animal's rabies certificate, and secure a city license, which will be given in the name of the Approved Rescue Group. The transfer of the animal to the Rescue Group and the assignment of a city license shall serve as the official transfer of ownership for the animal.

Medical Release

- All animals will be held for the mandatory three-day Impoundment Period after arriving at the shelter, unless they are surrendered by their owners or subject to a Medical Release.
- BARC personnel may authorize animals that have certain medical conditions or that are at high risk to be released to a Rescue Group prior to the expiration of the Impoundment Period. Conditions that may justify a Medical Release include:
 - Upper respiratory infection
 - Ringworm
 - High heartworm positive status
 - Puppies or kittens five months old or younger
 - Neonatal

- Pregnancy
 - Having been hit by a car and/or having broken bones
 - Mange (sarcoptic)
- The release of at-risk animals before the Impoundment Period expires requires the completion of a Medical Release Form and BARC staff approval.
- Rescue Groups must agree to return animals released for medical reasons if the animal is claimed by its owner within the Impoundment Period.
- During the Impoundment Period, the Rescue Group is responsible for all expenses the Rescue Group incurs and may not spay or neuter the animal or perform other non-essential surgeries. BARC will use its best efforts to ensure that the Rescue Group is reimbursed by the owner for any expenses incurred in caring for the animal.
- Animals released during the Impoundment Period will be on view to the public online and in a binder kept in the front lobby and are not deemed transferred until the Impoundment Period has expired.

Spay and Neuter

- Animals that have not been spayed or neutered may be transferred if the Rescue Group agrees to have such animals spayed/neutered per the Rescue Group Application and Agreement.
- If a Rescue Groups requests that BARC staff not spay/neuter an animal, the Rescue Group must sign a Sterilization Agreement for the animal and provide proof of spay/neuter within 30 days.
 - If spay/neuter is not completed within 30 days for medical reasons, the group may provide proof of the animal's condition and request an additional 60 days to report.
- For ease of reporting, the Rescue Group may provide one monthly report that includes proof of spay/neuter for all animals it transferred under a Sterilization Agreement in the prior month.

Approved Breed Specific Rescue (BSR) Groups

- In recognition of their enhanced role in the education of the public and BARC staff regarding the care and handling of specific animal breeds, BSR Groups will be given first priority for pure bred dogs.
- Only BSR Groups may place a hold on pure bred dogs during the Impoundment Period. The BSR Group may also view the animal during this time. The BSR Group's hold will expire 24 hours after the end of the Impoundment Period.
 - If the BSR Group does not retrieve the animal during the 24 hours after the end of the Impoundment Period, the animal will be made available for hold or transfer by any Rescue Group and for adoption by the general public.
- After the Impoundment Period, BSR Groups and non-breed specific Rescue Groups are subject to the same guidelines.
- To become an Approved Breed Specific Rescue Group, the organization must satisfy the requirements for an Approved Rescue Group and must commit to provide the following education services to the public and BARC staff:
 - Complete the Breed Information Handout Template with details on the specific health, care, and behavioral training needs of the breed, as well as contact information for additional resources. These handouts will be made available online and to members of the public who visit BARC as potential adopters.
 - Provide breed-specific training sessions for the public and BARC staff. Such training sessions will not exceed two, one hour sessions each year without approval of the BSR Group.

- Participate in BARC's follow up calls to recent adopters of animals of your breed. BARC staff and volunteers currently call recent adopters one week after adoption to check on the acclimation of the animal and to answer any questions the adopter may have. When a member of the public has adopted a pure bred animal, the follow-up call to that recent adopter will be assigned to the appropriate BSR Group.

Holds

Type of Animal	During Impoundment Period	After Impoundment Period
Pure Breed	Only Approved Breed Specific Rescue Groups may place a hold. Hold expires 24 hours after Impoundment Period ends.	Any Rescue Group may place a 24 hour hold.
All Other Animals	Any Rescue Group may place a hold. Hold expires 24 hours after Impoundment Period ends.	Any Rescue Group may place a 24 hour hold.

- Holds placed on animals at any time during the Impoundment Period will expire 24 hours after the end of the Impoundment Period.
- Rescue Groups may place 24-hour holds on animals that are available to the public (in person or over the phone) to arrange for the transfer of the animal. Holds will be noted and monitored.
- All holds will be recorded on the kennel card and in BARC's information management system.
- In the event that a Rescue Group continually places holds on animals without rescuing them, BARC may refuse to hold animals for that Rescue Group or may terminate the Rescue Group's participation in the BARC Rescue Group Program.
- Holds and Potential General Public Adoptions: The Rescue Group Application asks whether each organization would like to make animals it has placed on hold available to the general public for adoption during its hold period.
 - If a Rescue Group indicates a willingness to make its hold animals available for public adoption, the Community Involvement Coordinator will contact your designated representative in the event that a suitable adopter arrives and indicates interest in an animal your Rescue Group is holding.
 - The animal on hold will only be released with approval from the designated representative.
 - A Rescue Group's repeated failure to pickup an animal for which a potential general public adopter had been identified will be tracked and may be grounds for termination from the BARC Rescue Group Program.

Transfer Fee Schedule

- BARC veterinary staff will categorize all animals as adoptable or unadoptable. Transfer fees will vary by category (adoptable or unadoptable) and based upon the length of the animal's stay at the shelter.
- The Rescue Group transfer fee includes a city license, vaccinations, heartworm testing, and a rabies certificate.

- The fees for Rescue Groups to transfer cats or dogs are as follows:

Length of Stay at BARC	Adoptable Dogs	Unadoptable Dogs	Cats
Up to 30 days	\$25	No charge	No charge
31 days or more	No charge	No charge	No charge

- The Rescue Group may secure additional veterinary services, such as spay/neuter and Microchipping, by paying additional fees. The current schedule of fees is available on the BARC website.

Supervision

- The Community Involvement Coordinator will assist your organization in the application process, placing animals on hold, and scheduling pickup times for animals.
- The Community Involvement Coordinator will also serve as your point of contact to resolve any issues that arise for your group while at BARC.

Facilities

- You may access the following shelter areas:
 - South Kennel public adoption areas
 - North Kennel Cat Ward
 - Front lobby
 - Dog runs
- Certain areas of the shelter are off-limits to rescue groups and volunteers, unless specifically authorized to enter by a BARC supervisor.

Off-limit areas include the Bay Dock, Isolation/Quarantine Ward, Surgery, Maternity Ward, and all personnel offices.

Privacy

- Any information pertaining to BARC records and cases which you may become privileged to (including names, addresses, phone numbers, etc.) as a result of your affiliation with BARC is confidential and may not be discussed with others, except as may be required by law.
- Under some circumstances, BARC staff may be prohibited from discussing with you certain specific details regarding cases that are under investigation or pending criminal court action.
- Your residential address and residential phone number will not be disclosed or provided to anyone unless specifically authorized by you or as may be required by law.

Animal Safety

- We ask that you follow strictly all BARC policies related to animal and people safety.
- You are required to wash your hands and/or change your gloves before and after each animal encounter, after cleaning animal cages or animal-care areas, and after contact with feces, blood, body fluids, secretions, excretions, exudates, or articles contaminated by these substances.
- In the Adoption Center, Rescue Group members must use a hand sanitizer after each animal contact.

Accidents or Injury Reporting

- All accidents or injuries sustained by you at BARC MUST be reported immediately to the Community Involvement Coordinator. A bite or scratch is considered an injury and must be treated immediately.
- You are required to fill out an accident or injury report for every incident. THERE ARE NO EXCEPTIONS.
- In an emergency situation, please focus on safety first!
- When treating an animal bite, you should:
 - Notify the Community Involvement Coordinator.
 - Flush the bite and surrounding area with soap and water or peroxide followed by water.
 - Fill out a Bite Report. The Bite Case unit will need this information to complete its investigation.
 - We encourage you to seek medical attention from your primary physician.

Resignations and Terminations

- If you choose to leave the BARC Rescue Group Program, we ask that you notify the Community Involvement Coordinator to be removed from the Rescue Group list.
- BARC can elect to terminate or suspend your organization's participation in the BARC Rescue Program. Reasons for termination can include, but are not limited to, the following:
 - Failure to follow the BARC Rescue Group Agreement and guidelines indicated in this policy
 - Inhumane treatment or mistreatment of animals
 - Misconduct with or abuse of staff, volunteers or citizens
 - Falsification of BARC records, including the Rescue Group Application
 - Insubordination
 - Theft
 - Possession of drugs or alcohol
 - Use of or being under the influence of alcohol or drugs while at BARC or BARC-related events
 - Presence in off-limit areas
 - Consistent failure to rescue animals your organization has placed on hold
 - Deliberate destruction of BARC's or an individual's property
 - Possession of unauthorized weapons or dangerous materials on the BARC facility or at BARC-related events
 - Any other justifiable reason deemed appropriate by the Community Involvement Coordinator

Grievance Procedure

- If you are terminated from the BARC Rescue Group Program, you have the right to appeal to BARC management.
- A written request for an appeal should be sent to the BARC Bureau Chief, Bureau of Animal Regulation and Care, 3200 Carr Street, Houston, Texas 77026.

<p style="text-align: center;">Bureau of Animal Regulation and Care RESCUE GROUP APPLICATION AND AGREEMENT</p>

Rescue Group Agreement

The following stipulations are agreed to by the undersigned Animal Rescue Group (the "Rescue Group") and the Bureau of Animal Regulation and Care ("BARC").

1. BARC agrees to designate a representative who will assist the Rescue Group's representative(s) in releasing animals for their group.
2. BARC agrees to provide to the Rescue Group any information in its possession regarding the animal's health and temperament.
3. BARC retains the sole authority to determine the availability of any animal and may deny transfer to the Rescue Group at any time.
4. The Rescue Group will provide to BARC a copy of its organizational mission, adoption standards and contracts, spay/neuter policies, and a list of designated representatives.
5. The Rescue Group agrees to comply with BARC Rescue Group Policies and Procedures.
6. The Rescue Group agrees to comply with all city, county and state codes regarding the care, sheltering, and adoption of animals.
7. The Rescue Group agrees to have any animal transferred from BARC spayed or neutered if it has not already been done at the time of transfer. Rescue Group must compile and provide proof of spay/neuter at least monthly.
8. If the Rescue Group transfers an animal with a medical problem, the group agrees to seek veterinary treatment for the animal.
9. Either party may, without cause, terminate this agreement. This agreement may be amended by mutual written agreement signed by both parties. This agreement shall be governed in accordance with the laws of the state of Texas. No employer-employee, joint venture or partnership arrangement is created or intended as a result of this agreement.

The undersigned representatives hereby agree upon these terms and conditions:

BARC Designee

Date

Rescue Group Representative

Date

Rescue Group Profile

Name of Group: _____

Primary Contact Person: _____

Mailing Address: _____

Telephone Number: _____

E-mail Address: _____

Preferred method of contact: ☐ E-mail ☐ Telephone

Animals we rescue: ☐ Dogs ☐ Cats ☐ Other (please specify) _____

Additional Representatives (authorized to transfer animals for your group)

1. Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone Number: _____

E-mail Address: _____

2. Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone Number: _____

E-mail Address: _____

3. Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone Number: _____

E-mail Address: _____

4. Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone Number: _____

E-mail Address: _____

Rescue Group Questionnaire

Group Name: _____

Designated Representative: _____

Supporting Documents:

- Provide proof of the organization's 501(c)(3) status.
- Attach a copy of the organization's mission.
- Attach a copy of the organization's adoption requirements and contract.
- Please provide copies of any other pertinent information which may help BARC understand your organization's procedures.

Please complete the following:

1. How long has this group been organized? _____
2. How many volunteers do you currently utilize? _____
3. What support can your group provide to BARC? (Check all that apply.)

<input type="checkbox"/> Referral Only	<input type="checkbox"/> Transfer sick, injured animals
<input type="checkbox"/> Animal Retrieval	<input type="checkbox"/> Pregnant animals
<input type="checkbox"/> Breed-specific Information Packets	<input type="checkbox"/> Moms and puppies/kittens
<input type="checkbox"/> Micro-Chip	<input type="checkbox"/> Temperament Evaluation
Other _____	
4. Does your group accept mixed breeds? _____
5. Please list any specific physical criteria for the type of animal your group accepts (including eye color, long/bob/natural tails, coat color, etc.) _____

6. How does your group house rescued animals? (Circle all that apply.)
Foster Homes
Veterinarians
Group Facility
Other _____
7. Which veterinarians does your group utilize?
 - a. Hospital Name: _____
Address: _____
Phone Number: _____
 - b. Hospital Name: _____
Address: _____
Phone Number: _____

8. Are there any other references who could provide additional information pertinent to this application?

a. Name: _____
Address: _____
Phone Number: _____

b. Name: _____
Address: _____
Phone Number: _____

9. Will your group accept animals with medical problems? _____
If yes, please explain. _____

10. Will treatment be provided prior to placement? _____

11. Does your organization place animals back with their original breeder? _____
If yes, under what conditions? _____

12. Does your organization require every animal to be spayed or neutered? ☐ Yes ☐ No
If yes, is the surgery done before or after adoption? _____

13. What is your group's policy on animals that have bitten a person? _____

14. What is your group's policy on animals that have bitten another animal? _____

15. Members of the general public sometimes indicate an interest in adopting an animal that is on hold for a Rescue Group. If the potential adopter is deemed qualified, are you willing to make animals your group has placed on hold available for public adoption at BARC?

☐ Yes ☐ No

16. What other information would your organization like to provide about your Rescue Group's eligibility? _____

Office Use Only

Required Information Received _____ Date _____

Rescue Group Approved / Disapproved Date _____

Added to Rescue Group Database Through Chameleon _____

BARC Representative _____